

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY TOKYO
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USLO PEKING

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 029167

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UN, KS, TH

SUBJECT: THAI INQUIRY ON UN COMMAND PROCEDURES

REF: (A) USUN 0198; (B) BANGKOK 1317; (C) SEOUL 9289
NOTAL

1. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THAI/PHILIPPINE INQUIRY IS PRE-
LIMINARY, LOW-LEVEL PROBE TO ASCERTAIN OUR REACTION TO
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A POSSIBLE REDUCTION OF THAI CONTRIBUTION TO UNC.
ADDRESSES WILL RECALL (REF C) THAT THAI FOREIGN MINISTER
TOLD KOREAN PRESS LAST DECEMBER THAT THAI UNC UNIT
WOULD REMAIN IN KOREA. ON THAT OCCASION, AS NOW,

STATUS OF THAI AF UNITS ASSIGNED TO UNC (REAR) IN JAPAN WAS NOT MENTIONED. IT IS UNCLEAR, THEREFORE, WHETHER RECENT PROBE IS MEANT TO SUGGEST AN ALTERATION OF THAI FOREIGN MINISTER'S POSITION OF DECEMBER OR WHETHER IT IS CONCERNED WITH THE UNIT IN JAPAN.

2. PER REF C, PRESENT THAI CONTRIBUTION TO UNC IS SIX-MAN HONOR GUARD AND FIVE-MAN LIAISON UNIT LOCATED IN SEOUL, PLUS 25-MAN AVIATION DETACHMENT (TWO C-130, AIR CREW AND MAINTENANCE PERSONNEL) LOCATED AT U.S. AIR FORCE BASE IN JAPAN. THE AIRCRAFT MAKE PERIODIC FLIGHTS TO KOREA TO DELIVER MATERIAL REQUIRED BY UNC FACILITIES.

WHILE REDUCTIONS IN THIS THAI CONTRIBUTION MIGHT NOT IN THEMSELVES BE IMPORTANT, THEY COULD HAVE SECONDARY CONSEQUENCES WHICH WOULD CAUSE US CONCERN.

3. ARTICLE XXV OF THE UN STATUS OF FORCES AGREEMENT (SOFA) WITH JAPAN PROVIDES THAT THE SOFA WILL TERMINATE WHEN ALL THE UNITED NATIONS FORCES HAVE BEEN WITHDRAWN FROM JAPAN. U.S. FORCES IN JAPAN ARE NOT UNDER THE UN SOFA. THE GOJ HAS IN THE PAST INDICATED THAT IT REGARDS THE THAI AF UNIT IN JAPAN AS CONSTITUTING THE ONLY OPERATIONAL UN FORCES WHOSE PRESENCE KEEPS THE UN SOFA IN EFFECT. THEIR DEPARTURE WOULD, THEREFORE, ALMOST CERTAINLY TERMINATE IT.

4. ARTICLE XXIV OF THE UN SOFA WITH JAPAN PROVIDES THAT ALL UNC FORCES IN JAPAN MUST BE WITHDRAWN FROM JAPAN WITHIN 90 DAYS AFTER ALL UN FORCES HAVE BEEN WITHDRAWN FROM KOREA. GOJ POSITION ON THIS POINT IS LESS CLEAR. IN 1972 GOJ SEEMED TO INDICATE (1972 TOKYO 6595) THAT THEN REMAINING "HONOR GUARDS" SUFFICED TO KEEP UN SOFA IN EFFECT. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT JAPANESE WOULD CONSIDER WITHDRAWAL OR FURTHER REDUCTION OF THAI UNIT IN KOREA TO TRIGGER ARTICLE XXIV AND, IN TURN, ARTICLE XXV TERMINATING THE SOFA.
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5. FURTHER, UNDER THE ACHESON-YOSHIDA AGREEMENT OF SEPTEMBER 8, 1951, THIRD-COUNTRY UN FORCES DEFENDING THE ROK ARE GRANTED VARIOUS BASE RIGHTS IN JAPAN DURING ANY HOSTILITIES. THIS WAS AMENDED IN 1960 TO PROVIDE THAT THESE THIRD-COUNTRY RIGHTS WOULD TERMINATE AT THE SAME TIME AS THE UN SOFA. WITHDRAWAL OR SUBSTANTIAL REDUCTION OF THAI UNITS IN EITHER JAPAN OR KOREA COULD, THEREFORE, HAVE ADDITIONAL EFFECT OF TERMINATING THESE RIGHTS AS WELL.

6. EMBASSY SHOULD NOT TAKE INITIATIVE ON UNC WITH THE THAI. HOWEVER, IF ASKED, EMBASSY MAY POINT OUT THAT THERE IS NO ESTABLISHED PATTERN OF PROCEDURES FOR WITH-

DRAWAL FROM UNC. SOME COUNTRIES HAVE NOTIFIED UNSYG AND THEN ROKG AND USG. OTHERS HAVE NOTIFIED ONLY ROKG AND USG THROUGH BOTH MILITARY AND DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS. THOUGH ESTABLISHED PROCEDURES DO NOT EXIST, WE BELIEVE BILATERAL DIPLOMATIC CHANNEL IS PROPER COURSE AS UNC IS AN AMERICAN COMMAND FORMED IN RESPONSE TO A UN SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION. THIS PROCEDURE, FOR EXAMPLE, WAS FOLLOWED WHEN NEW ZEALAND WITHDREW ITS LIAISON OFFICER IN EARLY 1971.

7. FYI: PAST WITHDRAWALS OF CONTINGENTS FROM AMONG 16 COUNTRIES ORIGINALLY SUPPORTING UN IN KOREA HAVE BEEN ACCOMPLISHED WITHOUT FANFARE. MOST RECENT CHANGE INVOLVED WITHDRAWAL OF THREE-MAN ETHIOPIAN LIAISON UNIT IN MID-1975. END FYI KISSINGER

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